

Psychiatrists most gifted by drug makers

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Psychiatrists in Vermont are earning more money from drug makers than any other medical specialists in the state.

Vermont officials said drug company payments to psychiatrists in the state increased to an average of \$45,692 each last year from \$20,835 in 2005, The New York Times reported Wednesday

Drug makers last year spent \$2.25 million on marketing payments, fees and travel expenses to Vermont doctors, hospitals and universities. The figure, however, does not include the costs of free drug samples or the salaries of sales representatives.

Drug makers generally spend twice as much to market drugs as they do to research them, the newspaper said.

The numbers were similar for psychiatrists in Minnesota, with payments ranging from \$51 to \$689,000. The Times found that psychiatrists who took the most money from makers of antipsychotic drugs tended to prescribe the drugs to children the most often.

The Senate Special Committee on Aging is holding a series of hearings on the issue.

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